

## RADIO SHOW – National Sickle Cell Awareness

**Sharon:** This is the Health Kansas Minute. I'm Sharon Watson, and with me is Dr. Howard Rodenberg, state health director with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. The month of September has been designated as National Sickle Cell Awareness Month. Explain what is sickle cell?

**Howard:** Sickle cell anemia is a genetic blood disease that causes the red blood cells to become crescent shaped and to function abnormally. African Americans are at greatest risk, but sickle cell has been found in all racial and ethnic groups.

**Sharon:** Is sickle cell contagious?

**Howard:** Sickle cell disease is not contagious. It is something people are born with, like diabetes or asthma.

**Sharon:** What are the symptoms?

**Howard:** Sickle cell damages the kidneys, lungs, bones, liver and central nervous system. People who have sickle cell disease may experience acute pain and discomfort. The good news is that treatment options are available. Anyone who thinks they might have sickle cell should ask their doctor.

**Sharon:** Thank you, Dr. Rodenberg! To learn more about health in Kansas, please visit [www.kdheks.gov](http://www.kdheks.gov). That's [www.kdheks.gov](http://www.kdheks.gov). This has been the Healthy Kansas Minute!